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Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"
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Preparations for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action

Proposed outcome document submitted by the Chairperson of the preparatory committee

I. Introduction

1. The Governments which came together at the special session of the General Assembly have reaffirmed their commitment to the goals and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, reviewed and appraised progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action, identified new challenges and trends affecting the full implementation of the Platform for Action and agreed upon further actions and initiatives **[European Union (EU): at global, national and local level to accelerate the implementation of the Platform for Action and]** to ensure that commitments for gender equality, development and peace are fully realized **[Turkey: and implemented through building alliances with the civil society groups including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and women's groups in particular]**.

[G-77 alternative: The Beijing Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, as contained in the report of the Conference, and as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/42, of 8 December 1995, constituted an agenda for the empowerment of women. The objective of the Platform for Action, which was in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, was to ensure the enjoyment of equal rights, opportunities and access to resources by women and girls, an equal share of responsibility for the family and a harmonious partnership between women and men, which is critical to the well-being of the human family, and the promotion of peace and development at all levels.]

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[JUSCANZ][1] alternative: The Governments which came together at the special session of the General Assembly have, also through the political declaration, reaffirmed their commitment to the goals and objectives contained in the 1995 Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, have reviewed and appraised progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action,[2] have identified new challenges and trends affecting the full implementation of the Platform for Action, have recognized that the goals and commitments made in the Platform for Action have not fully been implemented and achieved and have agreed upon further actions and initiatives to ensure that commitments for gender equality, development and peace are fully realized.]

2. **[G-77 delete:** Since 1996, the Commission on the Status of Women has reviewed progress in each of the 12 critical areas of concern and adopted further actions for accelerated implementation. Together with the Platform for Action, these actions continue to form the basis for further progress and accountability to the world's women and towards the achievement of gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.] **[G-77: The Beijing Platform for Action identified 12 critical areas for priority action to achieve the advancement and empowerment of women through the elimination of all practices that discriminate against women and inhibit their equal access to productive resources and economic independence.]**

[JUSCANZ alternative: In implementing and advancing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action a dual strategy should be adopted through mainstreaming a gender perspective into all legislation, policies and programmes and actions specifically targeted at women and girls. Central to any gender analysis and policy is respect and esteem for the diversity of women's experiences and recognition of the fact that women face barriers due to factors such as race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability, because they are indigenous women or because of other status. Collaboration with civil society is essential for the achievement of the goal of the Platform for Action. Men should be actively involved in promoting gender equality. Work towards gender equality must be based upon the recognition of the human rights of all women and girls as inalienable, integral and indivisible parts of universal human rights and the empowerment of women and their full participation as fundamental to the achievement of gender equality, development and peace.]

3. **[G-77 delete:** In implementing and advancing the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, an integrated approach should be adopted that encompasses **[EU: mainstreams gender concerns and promotes women's empowerment at all levels, encompassing]** policy, legislative **[Turkey: accountability]** and programme measures **[Turkey: which promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in all walks of life]**. These measures must be supported by institutional arrangements, adequate data, targets and monitoring mechanisms, as well as allocation of sufficient resources] **[EU: and the establishment of consultation procedures and partnerships with NGOs and other institutions of civil society.]**

[G-77 alternative: The primary responsibility for fully implementing the Platform for Action as well as further actions and initiatives contained in these documents lies with States. The Commission on the Status of Women has reviewed progress in each of the 12 critical areas of concern and since 1996 has adopted agreed conclusions and recommendations for accelerated implementation. Together with the Platform for Action, these agreed conclusions and recommendations form the basis for further progress of and accountability to the world's women and for the achievement of gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.]

[JUSCANZ alternative: There is a need to intensify efforts and actions to ensure the full implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. Actions towards gender equality must be supported by institutional arrangements, adequate data, targets and monitoring mechanisms as well as allocation of sufficient resources. Political will and accountability

[1] JUSCANZ includes Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the United States of America.

[2] JUSCANZ: Footnote to the various components which feed into the review process, i.e., reports or agreed conclusions from the regional meetings and the report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (E/CN 6/2000/PC/2).

is a prerequisite for achieving gender equality, development and peace.]

[G-77 new 3 bis: In implementing and advancing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, an integrated and balanced approach that encompasses policy, legislative and programme measures towards both development and equality for women should be adopted. These must be supported by institutional arrangements, allocation of sufficient resources, adequate data, targets, national accountability and follow-up.]

[G-77 new 3 ter: The objective of the Platform for Action, which is in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, is the empowerment of all women. The full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women is essential for the empowerment of women. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The implementation of the Platform, including through national laws and the formulation of strategies, policies, programmes and development priorities, is the sovereign responsibility of each State, in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the significance of and full respect for various religious and ethical values, cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of individuals and their communities should contribute to the full enjoyment by women of their human rights and the achievement of equality, development and peace. (para. 9 of the Platform for Action).]

[G-77 new 3 quater (para. 1 above modified): The Governments that came together at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly have reaffirmed their commitment to the goals and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, reviewed, appraised and assessed progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action, identified obstacles as well as current challenges and trends affecting the full implementation of the Platform for Action and have agreed upon further actions and initiatives to fulfil the commitments contained therein for the achievement of the objectives of Women 2000: commitments for gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century.]

II. Achievements and obstacles in the implementation of the twelve critical areas of the Platform for Action

[EU: Assessment of obstacles and achievements must be made in relation to the commitments made in the Platform for Action and its 12 critical areas, namely by looking into the actions taken and the results attained, as indicated in national reports as well as in reports of the Secretary-General and other relevant sources. Such assessment shows that, even though significant positive developments can be identified, barriers remain and there is still the need to further implement the goals and commitments made in Beijing. The summary of achievements and of persistent or new obstacles can, therefore, constitute a global framework for the identification of further actions and initiatives to achieve and accelerate the full implementation of the Platform for Action at all levels and in all areas.]

[Canada: In 1999, Governments reported on their implementation of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action. Experiences since Beijing have varied between countries; this section reflects major issues of importance to all countries.]

A. Women and poverty

4. **Achievements:** [EU **delete:** Major accomplishments in this area include the recognition of the gender dimensions of poverty [Canada: **particularly the different impact of poverty on women,**] and efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into policies and programmes.] [EU: **Major accomplishments include recognition of the importance of addressing gender equality as a prerequisite for achieving poverty eradication; and efforts have been made to integrate a gender perspective systematically into poverty eradication policies and programmes.**] Progress has been made

by pursuing a two-pronged approach of promoting employment and income-generating activities for women and providing basic social services, including education and health care. **[Holy See: Policies and programmes have been implemented to strengthen the family in performing its societal and developmental roles.]** **[EU delete:** Micro-credit**]** **[EU: Micro-financing]** for women has emerged as a successful strategy for economic empowerment. **[Canada delete:** The situation of female-headed households has received more policy support.**]** **[Canada: Policy development has taken account of the particular needs of female-headed households.]** **[Canada delete:** Global understanding of gender and poverty issues has been enhanced through research and the development of conceptual tools for gender impact assessments.**]** **[Canada: Research has enhanced our understanding of the differing impacts of poverty on women and men, including the relationship between remunerated and unremunerated work, and tools have been developed to assist with this assessment.]**

5. **Obstacles**: Many factors have contributed to widening economic inequality between women and men including **[Holy See: unfulfilled commitments to provide development assistance,]** income inequality, unemployment and deepening of poverty levels of the most **[EU delete:** vulnerable**]** **[EU: marginalized]** groups. **[EU/Canada/Holy See delete:** especially rural and poor women.**]** **[Canada: including rural women, single mothers, indigenous women, immigrant and refugee women, women with disabilities, older women.]** **[Holy See: especially rural women, refugees, migrants and internally displaced women.]** **[Canada delete:** High debt burdens, military spending, **[EU: national and ethnic conflicts]** **[Holy See: sanctions, foreign occupation]** and low levels of development assistance **[EU: as well as the lack of efficient use of resources,]** thwart national efforts to combat poverty.**]** **[Turkey: The increasing burden for women of unpaid work and lack of remuneration for reproductive work. Insufficient legislative action and therefore lack of positive action and social protection policies to redress the gender segregation and gender-based pay inequalities in the labour market]. [EU: Unequal pay and gender segregation in the labour market and]** **[Turkey: Gender disparities in economic power-sharing and]** Unequal access to **[EU/Turkey: and control over]** capital, resources and labour markets as well as socio-cultural practices **[Canada: and unequal distribution of unremunerated work between women and men]** hinder women's economic empowerment and exacerbate the feminization of poverty. **[Canada delete:** Structural adjustment programmes have often meant budget cuts for basic social services, including education and health, aggravating illiteracy and maternal mortality of poor women.**]** **[Canada: Structural adjustment measures have in some cases led to [budget cuts in basic social services, including education and health, impeding efforts to improve women's literacy and access to health-care services.]** **[EU: The absence of appropriate indicators which track the feminization of poverty and]** **[Canada delete:** The absence of data disaggregated by sex and age and analyses prevents the accurate assessment of unpaid work among women**]** **[EU: and the development of efficient gender-oriented programmes in order to eradicate poverty. Inadequate wages for social work, largely shouldered by women, and the consequences for income-related social security systems result in the feminization of poverty.]** **[Canada: Continuing lack of recognition of the value of unremunerated work as well as lack of data and analyses for policy development have hindered efforts to effectively combat poverty. Armed conflict abounds in many of the poorest areas of the world, creating abnormally high levels of female-headed households living in poverty.]**

B. Education and training for women

6. **Achievements:** Progress was achieved in girls education and training at all levels, **[Canada delete:** especially**]** where there was sufficient political commitment and resource allocation. Measures were taken in all regions to initiate **[Canada: culturally appropriate]** alternative education systems to reach **[Canada: women and]** girls in indigenous communities and other **[EU delete:** disadvantaged**]** **[EU: marginalized]** groups to encourage girls to pursue **[Canada delete:** non-conventional**]** **[Canada: non-traditional]** fields of study and to remove gender biases from education.

7. **Obstacles: [EU: Economic, social and cultural barriers at local and national levels in many countries maintain lower enrolment rates for girls than for boys.]** Efforts to **[Canada delete:** eradicate

illiteracy] [Canada: strengthen literacy] among women and to increase their access to all levels and types of education were constrained by the lack of [Canada/Holy See: political will and] resources to improve educational infrastructure and undertake educational reforms; persisting gender discrimination and bias [EU: including in teacher training] [Canada: including in national laws]; [EU delete: sex-segregated] [EU: gender-based] occupational stereotyping in schools, [EU: institutions of further education] and communities; [Canada: lack of childcare facilities;] [EU: persistent use of gender stereotypes in educational materials;] and insufficient attention to the link between women's enrolment in higher educational institutions and labour market dynamics. [Canada: The remote location of some indigenous communities makes attracting and retaining teaching professionals difficult and can result in lower quality education.]

C. Women and health

8. **Achievements:** Achievements include: [EU: increased attention to reproductive health and sexual and reproductive rights of women;][Canada/ Holy See delete: a reduction in maternal mortality] [Holy See: in a few countries, some progress in reducing maternal mortality]; increased [EU: knowledge and] use of [EU delete: modern contraceptives] [Canada: including emergency contraception;] [EU: family planning methods; increased awareness among men of their responsibility in family planning]; [Canada/EU delete: the testing and development of male contraceptives;] increased attention to [EU: sexually transmitted diseases, including] human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) infection among women; the introduction of a gender perspective into [EU: health and] health-related educational [Canada: and physical] activities, including gender-specific tobacco [Canada: control] and drug prevention and rehabilitation programmes; increased recognition of the specific health [Canada delete: problems of older women] [Canada: needs of women throughout the life cycle; better recognition of women's role as essential primary health-care providers within their own families; increased participation of women as workers in the health-care system;] better prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases [Canada: including among women and girls]; increased attention to women's mental health; [EU: and increased attention to health conditions at work and environmental considerations] [Canada: and the reaffirmation by Governments to their commitment to promote women's reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed to at the five-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development by the General Assembly in July 1999.]

9. **Obstacles:** [Holy See: Endemic, communicable and chronic diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS continue to take a toll, especially on women.] The absence of a holistic approach to health [Canada: and health] care for women and girls throughout the life cycle [Canada: and insufficient attention to the role of social and economic determinants of health] constrained progress and was exacerbated by a lack of [Canada delete: gender-sensitive] [Canada: gender-specific] health research and technology. [EU: for instance regarding gender-specific symptoms and manifestations; insufficient gender dimension in the provision of health information and services for women in many developing countries; lack of] data disaggregated by sex and age and [Canada delete: user-friendly] [Canada: gender-relevant] indicators. [Canada: The predominant focus of health-care systems on treating illness rather than maintaining optimal health also prevents a holistic approach.] [Holy See: Poverty and] A shortage of financial and human resources, aggravated by the privatization of health sectors, [EU: in some cases,] had resulted in inadequate infrastructure and service delivery [Canada: which has led to reduced services for and less attention to the health of the most vulnerable groups of women, including indigenous women, immigrant and refugee women, women with disabilities, women living in poverty and rural women]. [EU: The testing and development of male contraceptives is still insufficient.] The adjustment of legal regulations and programmes to international standards [EU: in particular in relation to sexual and reproductive health,] remained limited. [EU: Barriers and failure of dialogue between men and women affect women's access to health care and education, especially in relation to prevention.] [Canada: Progress in addressing high rates of maternal mortality and morbidity has been limited. Lack of specific research on particular groups of

women such as indigenous women, minority women and older women has led to inadequate or inappropriate health care. Indigenous women and girls continue to face particular challenges to their health, including low life expectancy rates and environmental impacts on their health. Women continue to experience occupational health and safety hazards and lack of information and knowledge about the effects of environmental factors on their health, including factors in their homes. There continues to be a lack of information about and access to contraceptives and sexual and reproductive health services. Women continue to experience a power imbalance in negotiating sexual activities and to bear sole responsibility for their sexual and reproductive health. In many countries, continued weakness of health infrastructure, staffing and financing, aggravated by restructuring of the health sector, has significantly threatened women's access to health care led to poor quality of health care for women and obstructed progress towards, inter alia, reduction in maternal mortality and morbidity; prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; addressing unmet needs for family planning; and screening and treatment for breast, cervical and ovarian cancers. There continues to be inadequate research on and distribution of female-controlled contraceptive methods that prevent unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, such as the female condom and microbicides. Gender and age discrimination as well as socio-cultural factors continue to have a negative impact on the access of women, including young women and girls, to health-care services, information and counselling, particularly sexual and reproductive health care and sexual education. The health-care services available to refugee women and girls, particularly sexual and reproductive health care, are still not sufficient and severely underfinanced.]

D. Violence against women

10. **Achievements: [Canada: There is an increased awareness that violence against women and girls is not a private matter but a human rights issue, an increased commitment to preventing and combating violence against women and girls and improved policy and programme development, including domestic violence being recognized as a criminal act in a number of countries, with an increased focus on holding the perpetrator accountable.]** Governments have initiated policy reforms and mechanisms such as interdepartmental committees, guidelines and protocols **[EU: and multidisciplinary, coordinated programmes]** to address violence. Governments have also introduced or reformed laws to protect women **[Holy See: and girls]** from various forms of violence, including sexual assault, harassment and trafficking, **[EU: and laws to prosecute perpetrators]. [Canada: The international community is beginning to recognize violence against women as a serious health issue. Health-care workers are seen to have a significant role to play in addressing this matter.]** Progress has been made in **[EU: research on the root causes of violence, as well as in]** services for abused women, including shelters, hot lines **[Turkey: which are primarily provided by NGOs and not adequately funded]**, **[Canada: emergency health services]** and special police units **[Canada: In some instances, special programmes have been initiated to address violence in indigenous families and to heal the legacy of widespread alcohol and substance abuse.]** Education for law enforcement, **[Canada delete:** medical personnel**] [Canada: health-care providers]** and welfare workers is being promoted. Educational materials for women and public awareness campaigns have been developed. **[EU: Women's movements and NGOs have had a crucial role in all these processes through awareness-raising campaigns, political pressure and direct provision of services to protect and empower women victims of violence.] [Croatia: Successful cooperation has been achieved between governmental and non-governmental organizations in the field of preventing violence against women. Women's NGOs have an important role in the daily task of dealing with female victims of all forms of violence.] [Canada delete:** The eradication of female genital mutilation has received international policy support, including the appointment of a Special Ambassador**] [Canada: Many Governments have begun a process aimed at eliminating female genital mutilation through educational and outreach programmes, as well as through adoption of legislative measures criminalizing the practice. A special ambassador focusing on the eradication of female genital mutilation has been appointed]** by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). **[Canada: There is new**

knowledge from research on gender roles, in particular on masculinity, and of the situation of children growing up in families with violence.]

11. **Obstacles: [EU/Canada delete:** A lack of understanding of the root causes of violence against women hinders efforts.] **[EU: Insufficient preventive strategies that would address the root causes of violence against women hinder progress. There is a lack of programmes to deal with the perpetrators and, in particular, their inability to solve situations of conflict peacefully.] [Canada: While some of the root causes of violence against women and girls have been identified, including socio-cultural attitudes that reinforce women's subordination in society, there has been slow progress in addressing these issues. There is an absence of a coordinated multidisciplinary approach to responding to violence, which should include the health system, work places, the media and the educational system, as well as the system of justice. Domestic violence, including sexual violence in marriage, is still treated as a private matter in some countries. There is insufficient awareness of the consequences of domestic violence, how to prevent it and the rights of victims.]** Inadequate data on the various forms of violence **[Canada delete:** further] impede informed policy-making. **[Holy See delete:** Socio-cultural attitudes and values] **[Holy See: Continued prevalence of harmful attitudes and traditional practices] [Canada: and economic inequality often]** reinforce women's subordinate place in society **[Canada: giving rise to many forms of violence, such as female genital mutilation and "honour" crimes]**. Although improving, the response of legal officials, especially criminal justice officials, is weak in many countries, while prevention strategies remain fragmented and reactive. **[Canada: Lack of appropriate research, policies and programmes for particularly vulnerable groups of women, including indigenous women, immigrant and refugee women and women with disabilities, has led to their over-representation as victims of violence.]**

E. Women and armed conflict

12. **Achievements: [EU delete:** The statutes and rules of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Criminal Court, adopted in 1998,] **[EU/Canada: Adopted in 1998, the statutes and rules of the ad hoc International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the statute of the International Criminal Court] [Canada delete:** incorporate gender concerns and gender-sensitive prosecutorial policies.] **[Canada: recognize a range of sexual and gender acts committed in armed conflict as among the most serious crimes in international law. The need for gender-specific procedures and methods in the investigation and prosecution of these crimes and for the inclusion of women and gender-expertise in the staff and officers of these courts is also recognized.]** There is wider recognition that armed conflict has different impacts on women and men and that a gender-sensitive application of international human rights and humanitarian law **[Canada delete:** by the armed forces] is important **[EU delete:** and, can be strengthened through training.] Women's **[EU/Canada delete:** potential] contribution to peace-building, peacemaking and conflict resolution is **[Canada: being increasingly]** recognized. Guidelines for the protection of refugee women have been adopted and gender-based persecution has been accepted as a basis for refugee status in some countries. Civics courses on non-violent conflict resolution have been introduced. **[Canada: There is greater recognition of gender differentiated experiences during humanitarian emergencies and the need to integrate a gender perspective in the planning, design and implementation of humanitarian activities. Steps have been taken to reduce the availability and use of arms, in particular anti-personnel landmines.]**

13. **Obstacles: [EU/Canada delete:** The absence, at all levels, of women from decision-making positions related to peacekeeping, peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction presents serious obstacles.] **[Canada: The lack of women at all levels of decision-making positions hinders peacekeeping, peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction.]** The **[Holy See delete:** changing] pattern of conflict, marked by **[Holy See: increased military spending,]** the targeting of civilians, **[Canada: including women, children and humanitarian personnel, as a deliberate war aim of combatants] [Holy See: the forced displacement of people, family disintegration, the recruitment of child soldiers, foreign occupation]** and the involvement of non-State actors, has had an adverse

impact on women and girls. **[EU: Gender-based violence, including systematic rape and forced pregnancy, is a strategy increasingly used in armed conflicts. Women are still particularly affected by the consequences of the use of anti-personnel mines. The limited participation of women, at all levels, in decision-making positions related to peacekeeping, peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction presents serious obstacles. Lack of training of the different actors dealing with women in situations of armed conflict or refugees, as regards their specific problems, hinders their solution.]** Wide access to weapons **[Holy See: including landmines]**, facilitated by the proliferation of and trade in arms, and particularly small arms, has further aggravated armed conflicts, **[EU: which have a particularly damaging effect on women and families.] [Canada: There are continued violations of international humanitarian law, international refugee law and human rights, including continued violation of women's human rights. Sexual and gender violence, including rape, is still a common weapon of war.]**

F. Women and the economy

14. **Achievements:** Governments have **[Canada delete:** enacted**] [Canada: introduced a variety of measures, including enacting]** legislation to comply with **[Canada: and promote]** international labour conventions that **[Canada delete:** promote**] [Canada: address]** women's economic **[EU: and social]** rights, equal access to **[EU: and control over]** economic resources and equality in employment. **[Canada: there has been increased participation of women in the labour market and subsequent gains in economic autonomy, growing public awareness and support for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the context of a developing global economy and increased opportunities to reach middle and higher level management positions in some countries.]** Women's share of employment has substantially increased, especially in the service sector. **[Canada: Some]** Governments have made provisions to address discriminatory and abusive behaviour in the workplace and to prevent unhealthy working conditions and have established funding mechanisms to promote women's roles in entrepreneurship. **[Canada: access to credit,]** education **[EU: and training, including scientific and technical skills] [EU delete:** science, technical fields**]** and decision-making. Legislation on maternity and **[Canada delete:** paternity**] [Canada: parental]** leave and child and family care benefits has been enacted **[Canada: by some Governments]** to address **[Canada delete:** women's **[EU: and men's]** multiple roles in the family and at work**] [Canada: the need to reconcile work and family responsibilities]**. Research has been conducted on barriers to economic empowerment and access to new information technologies faced by women.

15. **Obstacles:** Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed. **[EU delete:** creating**] [EU: This has led to]** wider economic disparities, **[EU: further segregation in the labour market, atypical modes of employment, such as temporary or casual work, creating difficulties in enforcing labour standards] [Holy See: the feminization of poverty,]** unsafe working environments and persistent **[Holy See: exploitation of child labour,]** gender inequality, **[EU: especially] [Canada: including]** in the informal economy and **[Canada delete:** rural**] [Canada: agricultural]** sector. **[Canada: The importance of a gender perspective in the development of macro-economic policy is still not widely recognized. The under-representation of women, particularly in developing countries, in the formulation and execution of economic policy and in decision-making bodies is an aggravating factor.]** Many women still work in the **[Canada delete:** rural**] [Canada: agricultural]** sector and informal economy as subsistence producers, **[EU: and in the service sector]** with low levels of income and little **[Holy See: job and]** social security. **[EU/Canada delete:** Women with comparable skills to men lag behind men in income and career mobility in the formal sector**] [EU: Women with comparable skills to men are confronted with a gender wage gap and hit the glass-ceiling]. [Canada: In most countries, women with comparable skills to men lag behind men in income and career mobility in many occupational groups. In the formal sector, equal pay for women and men for equal work and work of equal value has not yet been realized. Gender discrimination in hiring and sexual harassment in the work place persist.] [EU/Canada delete:** Few countries have legislated in favour of women's ownership of land and other property**] [EU: There are still some countries that deny women's equal rights to ownership and control of land and other property.] [Canada: There**

are some countries that still do not recognize women's right to ownership of land and other property.] **[EU/Canada delete:** Failure to recognize that women have both productive and reproductive roles has meant that women have greater responsibilities and burdens as well as more unpaid work.**]** **[Canada: Failure to recognize that women are engaged in both productive and reproductive activities has meant that women's higher workloads and unequal share of unpaid work have persisted. Funding cuts to health care and other institutional programmes have led to increased family responsibilities for women. Many women are subjected to pregnancy testing for employment and face discrimination at work related to pregnancy.]** **[EU: Progression in the professions, in most cases, is still more difficult for women, owing to the lack of structures and measures that take maternity and family responsibilities into account. Persistent gender stereotyping may lead to a low status of male workers as fathers and to an insufficient encouragement for men to reconcile professional and family responsibilities. Lack of family-friendly policies regarding the organization of work increases these difficulties. Implementation of legislation and practical support systems is still inadequate. The combination of remunerated work and care-giving within the household and the community still leads to a disproportionate burden for women as long as there is insufficient sharing of tasks and responsibilities with men. It is still also women who perform the larger part of unremunerated work.]**

G. Women in power and decision-making

16. **Achievements:** **[EU/Canada delete:** An extensive discussion on women in power and their participation in decision-making and its importance for society continued at governmental and non-governmental levels, contributing to an increased awareness of the systemic changes that are needed to bring about a gender balance.**]** **[Canada: There has been growing acceptance of the importance to society to the full participation of women in decision-making and power at all levels and in all forums, including the intergovernmental, governmental, and non-governmental sectors. This has led to an increased awareness of the systemic changes that are needed to bring about a gender balance.]** An increasing number of countries applied **[Canada delete:** affirmative action**]** **[Canada: employment equity]** policies, including quota systems, **[Canada: goals]** and targets, **[EU: or voluntary agreements]** developed training programmes for women's leadership and introduced measures to reconcile the family and professional responsibilities of both women and men. National and international networks of women politicians, parliamentarians, activists and professionals in various fields have been established or strengthened.

17. **Obstacles:** **[EU/Canada delete:** Despite general acceptance of the need for a gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, a gap between *de jure* and de facto equality has persisted.**]** **[EU: Despite substantial improvements of de jure equality between women and men, the actual representation of women at the highest levels of national and international decision-making has not significantly changed since the Beijing Conference in 1995. A gap between de jure and de facto equality has persisted at political, as well as at the socio-economic levels.]** **[Canada: Despite the acceptance of the need for a gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, women's representation at the highest levels of national and international decision-making has changed little since 1995. In 1999, women comprised only 12.7 per cent of legislators worldwide and women's representation at the ministerial and sub-ministerial levels shows little change.]** Traditionally assigned gender roles circumscribe women's choices in education and careers and compelled women to assume the burden for household responsibilities. Initiatives and programmes aimed at women's increased participation in decision-making were hindered by a lack of: human and financial resources for training and advocacy for political careers; accountability of elected officials **[EU: and political parties]** for promoting gender equality and women's participation in public life; **[EU/Canada delete:** and support of other women by women in positions of power**]** **[EU: clear and transparent appointment and selection criteria for decision-making posts; social awareness of the importance of balanced representation of women and men in decision-making; reluctance of men to share power; sufficient dialogue and cooperation with women's NGOs; and failure to adapt political structures to make them women friendly.]** **[Canada: women's double burden of paid and unpaid work leading to a lack of free time; and societal attitudes**

that do not value women's approaches to decision-making, networking and politics, when different from men's. Certain groups of women including indigenous women continue to face particular barriers to power and decision-making.]

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

18. **Achievements:** National **[Canada: and provincial/state]** machineries have been instituted and recognized as the institutional base acting as "catalysts" for promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming and monitoring of the implementation of the Platform for Action. **[Turkey: as well as designing, monitoring, evaluating, advocating and executing, where appropriate, equality and support policies for the advancement of women.] [Canada: In many countries,]** Progress has been achieved in terms of the visibility, status, outreach and coordination of activities of these machineries **[Canada delete:** in incorporating gender mainstreaming in the work of ministries and in the inclusion of gender perspectives in legislation, policies, programmes and projects at national and international levels.] **[Canada: Gender mainstreaming has been widely embraced as a strategy to enhance the impact of traditional policies to promote gender equality. This has meant the incorporation of a gender perspective in all legislation, policies, programmes and projects and has] [Turkey: These machineries, despite their limited financial resources, notably contributed to the development of human resources in the field of gender studies and also to the generation and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age, gender-sensitive research and documentation and]** [They] also contributed to the generation and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age, **[Canada delete:** gender-sensitive] **[Canada: gender-based]** research and documentation. **[Canada: Within the United Nations system much progress has been made in the mainstreaming of a gender perspective including through the development of tools and the creation of gender focal points.]**

19. **Obstacles:** A lack of **[EU/Canada/Turkey: strong political will,]** adequate financial and human resources **[EU: and, in some cases, of clear mandates] [Turkey: their often marginalized location within the national government structures and paucity of authority]** is the main obstacle confronting national machineries, compounded by a lack of understanding of gender equality and **[Canada: the implications of]** gender mainstreaming, prevailing gender stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes, competing government priorities and insufficient links to civil society. **[Turkey: Often vulnerable to political changes in the governments, these bodies are constrained by organizational, conceptual and structural constraints that also limit their capacity to promote gender accountability. Their relatively weak location among other State institutions inhibit the capacity of the national machineries to effectively address budgetary implications and resource allocation to issues related to the advancement of women, gender equality and gender mainstreaming which require transformational processes or organizational changes.]** The activities of the national machineries were also hindered by structural and communication problems within and among government agencies. **[EU delete:** In some cases, these machineries lack a clear mandate, tools, resources and experience in conducting monitoring and evaluation activities.]

I. Human rights

20. **Achievements:** Legal reforms have been undertaken and discriminatory provisions have been eliminated in civil, penal and personal status law governing marriage and family relations, women's property and ownership rights and women's political, work and employment rights. Steps have been taken to realize women's de facto enjoyment of their human rights through the creation of an enabling environment, including the adoption of policy measures, the improvement of enforcement and monitoring mechanisms and the implementation of legal literacy and awareness campaigns. **[EU: as well as the effort to eliminate harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation. Women's NGOs have contributed to heighten awareness that women's rights are human rights and to generate support for the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the statute of the International Criminal Court.]** The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has been ratified or acceded to by 165 countries, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention has been **[EU**

delete: adopted and] signed by 25 States parties. **[EU: Efforts have also been made to mainstream a gender perspective into the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and in the Commission on Human Rights.] [Canada: Progress has been made on mainstreaming the human rights of women and a gender perspective in the United Nations system; for example, this is now a regular agenda item at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as well as being integrated into other agenda items.]**

21. **Obstacles:** Discriminatory legislation still exists and family, civil and penal codes, **[EU: as well as labour laws,] [Canada delete:** are still not fully gender sensitive] **[Canada:. still have not fully integrated a gender perspective.] [Canada:. In a number of countries women still lack equality in fundamental areas like land ownership and inheritance rights.] [EU: In some countries, gender discrimination has even been enforced by law.]** Legislative and regulatory gaps **[EU delete:** persist, perpetuating] **[EU: as well as lack of implementation and enforcement, perpetuate]** *de jure* as well as de facto inequality and discrimination. Women have insufficient access to the law, resulting from lack of legal literacy, **[EU: information]** and resources, insensitivity and gender bias of law enforcement officials and the judiciary and the persistence of traditional and stereotypical attitudes. **[EU: There is still a lack of awareness of the human rights of women.] [Canada: There is a lack of protection of women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and non-recognition of women's and girls' reproductive rights as human rights. Some women continue to encounter barriers to justice and enjoyment of their human rights because of their racial or ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation, age, disability, indigenous status, refugee or migrant status as well as social and cultural norms.]**

J. Women and the media

22. **Achievements: [EU/Canada delete:** The placement of women in various] **[EU: Women have achieved some] [Canada: women now occupy various]** high-level decision-making positions **[EU/ Canada delete:** has taken place] and the establishment of local, national and international women's media networks has ensured global information dissemination, exchange of views and support to women's groups active in media work. The development of information and communication technologies, especially the Internet, has provided improved communication opportunities **[EU: for the empowerment of women and girls] [Canada delete:** and has influenced the participation of women in the media] **[Canada: which enabled an increasing number of women to participate in knowledge sharing, networking and electronic commerce activities]**. The number of women's media organizations and programmes has increased, facilitating the aims of increased participation and promotion of positive portrayals of women in the media. Progress has been made to combat negative images of women by establishing professional guidelines and voluntary codes of conduct encouraging fair gender portrayal and the use of non-sexist language in media programmes.

23. **Obstacles: [Canada delete:** Women are still not employed in sufficient numbers in key decision-making positions to influence media policy.] Negative images of women, stereotyped portrayals and pornography have increased in some instances, and **[Canada delete:** journalists] **[Canada: areas of journalism]** remain who are biased against women. **[Canada delete:** The field of information and communications technologies is based on male norms **[EU delete:** and Western culture.]] **[Holy See: Poverty, the lack of access and opportunities, illiteracy and] [EU delete:** Language barriers, **[Canada: literacy, skills and access]** prevent some women from using the Internet.] Development of and access to Internet infrastructure is limited **[EU: particularly for women]** and depends on political will, cooperative efforts and financial resources. **[Canada: Women are still are not employed in sufficient numbers in key decision-making positions to influence media policy.]**

K. Women and the environment

24. **Achievements: [EU/Canada: Some]** National environment policies and programmes have incorporated gender perspectives. Women's participation in decision-making has been enhanced, with more women assuming high-level and other posts in environmental agencies. Governments have formed partnerships with NGOs. In recognition of the link

between poverty, **[Canada: health]** and environmental degradation, Governments have included income-generation activities for women, as well as training in natural resource management and environmental protection **[Canada: and have begun research on the impact of the environment on women's health]**. Projects have been launched to preserve and utilize women's traditional knowledge in the management of natural resources. **[Canada: The traditional ecological knowledge of indigenous women, including their elders, is increasingly seen as the foundation for widespread practice by younger generations of sustainable development and preservation of biodiversity.]**

25. **Obstacles:** **[Canada delete:** There is a lack of public awareness about environmental issues and of the benefits of gender equality for promoting environmental protection.] **[Canada: Women's lack of access to technical skills, resources and information and the lack of information about environmental risks faced by women has impeded progress in environmental decision-making. Research, action and public awareness remain limited regarding the differential impacts and implications for women and men of environmental problems and their proposed solutions.]** Environmental policies and programmes **[Canada delete:** lack a gender perspective and fail to account for women's roles and contributions to environmental sustainability.] **[Canada: often fail to account for women's integral role in promoting sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and approaches to natural resource management.]** The shortage of women **[Canada: including indigenous and rural women]** in the formulation and execution of environmental policy and their under-representation in decision-making bodies **[Canada delete:** is an aggravating factor.] **[Canada: and an absence of deliberate strategies and institutional mechanisms to assess and address environmental risks faced by women are factors.]**

L. The girl child

26. **Achievements:** Progress was made in primary and, to a lesser extent, in secondary and tertiary education for girls, owing to **[Canada delete:** the creation of more gender-sensitive school environments] **[Canada: schools becoming more responsive to the needs of girls and boys]**, support mechanisms for pregnant girls and teenage mothers, increased non-formal education opportunities **[Canada: through sport, drama and cultural activities]** and enhanced attendance at science and technology classes. Increased attention was given to the health of the girl child, including the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents. An increasing number of countries introduced legislation to ban female genital mutilation and imposed heavier penalties **[Canada delete:** on sex abusers and those involved in the commercial sexual exploitation of the girl child.] **[Canada: on those involved in sexual abuse and exploitation of the girl child, including for commercial ends.]**

27. **Obstacles:** Traditional discriminatory attitudes against women and girls, **[Canada: including traditional roles]** **[EU: persisting forms of child labour, including domestic child labour]** and inadequate awareness of the specific situation of the girl child, for example, domestic responsibilities **[EU: lack of finance]**, which often prevent her from pursuing education, **[EU: have]** contributed to a lack of opportunities for girls to become self-reliant and independent. **[EU: Harmful traditional practices, including early and forced marriage, sexual exploitation and violence often result in unwanted pregnancies and/or HIV/AIDS, which may also lead to expulsion from school and educational training institutes.]** Programmes were hindered by **[Canada delete:** a lack of] **[Canada: an insufficient allocation of]** financial and human resources, **[Canada: a lack of]** statistical data disaggregated by sex and age and technical capacity. There were few established national mechanisms to implement policies and programmes for the girl child and coordination among responsible institutions was insufficient. **[Canada: Counteracting some of the advances in legal protection, there is increased sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of the girl child in order to avoid infection with HIV/AIDS. Adolescents continue to lack access to sexual and reproductive health information, education and services needed to address, inter alia, unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. The socialization of children and young people has not been addressed so that boys and men, as well as girls and women, continue to believe that females are subordinate thus perpetuating existing inequality.]**

III. Current challenges affecting the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action

28. The review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action occurred in a rapidly changing global context. Since 1995, a number of issues have gained prominence or acquired new dimensions which pose additional challenges to the full [**EU: and accelerated**] implementation of the Platform [**Canada delete:** and their implications] [**Canada: by Governments, the private sector and NGOs. The implication of these new trends**] for gender equality need to be analysed thoroughly. [**EU: Insufficient political commitment to gender equality at all levels and insufficiently applied methods for assessing progress, as well as limitations in terms of mainstreaming gender concerns still continue to hamper progress in implementing the Platform for Action.**] Consequently, further actions and initiatives are needed to respond to the following challenges and trends, some of which were partly addressed in the Platform.

29. The globalization process has [**Canada delete:** caused] [**Canada: been characterized by**] policy shifts in favour of more open trade and financial flows, privatization of state-owned enterprises [**Canada delete:** and lower public spending]. This change has transformed patterns of production [**EU delete:** and accelerated technological advances in communication.] [**EU: and affected the lives of women, both as workers and as consumers, while increasing inequality. Until now, the gender impact of changes aiming at a better balance between economic, employment and social policies and sustainable development has not yet been systematically monitored.**] [**Canada delete:** Globalization has also affected cultural values, life styles, advertising and the media.] [**Canada: Increased international integration as a result of globalization has also had cultural, political, and social impacts.**] [**EU delete sentence:** Momentous political changes, including new forms of governance, [**Canada: growth of international civil society**] [**Canada delete:** and more universal realization of human rights] [**Canada: the movement towards the universalization of human rights**] has accompanied these trends.] While globalization has brought greater economic opportunities and autonomy to some women, others have become more vulnerable. Although in many countries the level of participation of the female labour force has risen, the increases in employment [**Canada: often**] have not been matched by improvements in [**Canada: wages and**] working conditions [**Canada: or marked decreases in the level of poverty among women. In some cases the majority of these new entrants are women who are employed in low paid, part-time, contingent and contract jobs marked by insecurity and by safety and health hazards; these new entrants are often among the first to lose their jobs and the last to be rehired.**] [**Canada: Large differences continue to persist with respect to quality, conditions and pay of female and male work.**] [**EU: and standard labour legislation is not applied to all workers.**] [**Canada delete sentence:** [**EU delete:** Most] [**EU: Many**] women continue to be employed in low paid, part-time jobs marked by insecurity and by safety and health hazards.] [**Canada delete sentence:** [**EU: In many countries**] Women continue to be among the first to lose jobs and the last to be rehired.]

30. Increasing disparities in the economic situation among and within countries, coupled with a growing economic dependence of States on external factors, [**EU delete:** have hindered their ability to provide social protection and social security as well as funding for the implementation of the Platform for Action.] [**EU: and financial crises have, in recent years, altered prospects of growth and caused economic instability in many countries, with a heavy impact on the lives of women. Such impact is reflected, in particular, in insufficient social protection and social security, as well as in the shift of the cost of reproduction and other welfare provisions from the public sector to the household.**] [**EU delete sentence:** The decreasing levels of funding available through international cooperation has [**Canada delete:** further marginalized and excluded the world's poorest countries] [**Canada: has been a further obstacle to the world's poorest countries**], within which women are among the poorest citizens.] [**EU: The agreed target of 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries for overall development assistance has not been achieved, although more, but not sufficient funding, has been allocated for women's programmes.**] Consequently, this increasing feminization of poverty has undermined efforts to achieve gender equality. [**EU: However, in their effort**

to develop coherent poverty reduction strategies, and in cooperation with other multilateral, governmental and non-governmental actors, the international financial institutions are giving increased attention to the incorporation of a gender perspective.] **[Canada: Given the]** Limited funding at the state-level **[EU delete:** coupled with declining development assistance] **[Canada delete:** makes it imperative that innovative approaches to the allocation of existing resources be employed, not only by Governments but also by their partners in the NGO and private sectors.] **[Canada: the challenge will be to find innovative approaches to the allocation of existing resources, not only by Governments, but also by their partners in the NGO and private sectors.]** **[Canada delete:** In order to address gender equality and to utilize existing resources in a gender-sensitive manner, gender analysis of national budgets is needed to determine whether the impact of expenditures on women and men are different.] **[EU suggestion: shift end of paragraph to part IV, as it is action-oriented]** **[Canada: The gender analysis of national budgets has emerged as a particularly effective tool for determining the differential impact of expenditures on women and men and ensuring a more gender-relevant utilization of existing resources. In an increasingly competitive global market, heath-care reforms, including budget cuts and privatization, have led to reduced public services, particularly for the most vulnerable groups of women such as indigenous women, rural women, refugee or migrant women, women with disabilities and women living in poverty. Budget cuts to health and the ageing of the population in some parts of the world, have placed additional burdens on women, both paid and unpaid, to care for disabled, ill, or elderly dependents in the home.]**

[Russian Federation new 30 bis: In countries with economies in transition women are bearing most of the hardships induced by the economic restructuring and are the first to lose jobs in times of recession. They are being squeezed out of fast growth sectors. The loss of childcare facilities owing to the elimination or privatization of state work places, the increased need for older care without the corresponding facilities and the continuing inequality of access to training for finding re-employment and to productive assets for entering or expanding businesses are current challenges facing women in these countries.]

31. Science and technology, as fundamental components of development, are transforming patterns of production, creating new **[EU: qualified]** jobs, **[EU: job classifications]** and ways of working and contributing to the establishment of a knowledge-based society. Technological change brings new opportunities **[EU: for women, if they are actively involved in the definition, design, development, implementation and gender impact evaluation of these changes.]** **[Canada: but only if we ensure equitable access, adequate training and take other measures so that these new technologies benefit those who need them most. New technologies should be harnessed to meet women's health needs, including reproductive health needs, through the development of, inter alia, female-controlled contraceptive methods, microbicides, sexually transmitted diseases diagnostics and single dose treatments for sexually transmitted diseases]**. Many women worldwide are effectively using new communications technologies for networking, advocacy, exchange of information **[Canada: and business]**, **[EU: media consultation]** and e-commerce initiatives. **[Canada: Governments, NGOs, communities and the private sector are benefiting from technological advances for the exchange of information and expertise.]** Nevertheless, **[Canada delete:** it should be recognized that] **[Holy See: many]** millions of the world's poorest women and men still do not have access to these facilities and are at risk of being excluded from this new field and the opportunities it presents.

32. The patterns of migratory flows of labour are changing. Women are increasingly involved in **[EU delete:** international] short-term labour migration, **[EU/Canada/Holy See delete:** mainly in domestic work and the entertainment industry] **[Holy See: mainly in farm labour and domestic work]**. While this situation increases their earning opportunities and self-reliance, it also exposes them **[Holy See: women and children, especially girls]** to **[Canada: inadequate working conditions, and]** the risk of trafficking, and other forms of abuse, **[EU: which constitute violations of human rights,]** in particular if they are poor, uneducated, unskilled or are working as illegal immigrants. **[Canada: Migration for labour often separates women from their children.]**

33. In recent years there have been developments towards establishing new, broad alliances nd coalitions of Governments, trade unions, professional

and consumer associations, **[Canada: employers,]** foundations and NGOs within and across countries to promote human rights, codes of conduct, and socially responsible forms of investment **[Canada delete:** that would include provisions for gender equality**]** **[Canada: that reflects a gender equality perspective. There is scope for Governments to commit themselves to take additional steps and foster innovative approaches in close collaboration with civil society]. [EU: Many health professionals continue to fail to observe medical ethics when providing services for women and girls.]**

34. **[Canada delete paragraph:** Increasing acceptance of gender equality has emerged, based on a **[Holy See delete:** shared set of**]** **[Holy See: universally accepted]** principles, norms, rules and institutional mechanisms and **[Holy See: also]** on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol. **[EU: A gender perspective has been incorporated in new human rights instruments such as the statutes of the International Criminal Court and of the ad hoc International Tribunals and is on the agenda of the international debate on how to ensure full and universal implementation of all human rights for all.]** Nonetheless, many countries have difficulty applying these international norms and standards to the national setting.**]**

[Canada alternative 1: Increasing awareness of the importance of gender equality and women's human rights including acceptance of international principles, norms and institutional mechanisms to advance and uphold these concepts, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol. Nonetheless, many countries have difficulty in applying the concept of gender equality and international standards to the national context.]

[Canada alternative 2: Increasing acceptance of gender equality has emerged, based on a shared set of principles, norms, rules and institutional mechanisms and international law, including in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol. However, many countries have ratified the Convention with reservations, including some that are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention. In addition, many countries have difficulty applying these international norms and standards to the national setting.]

35. **[EU delete paragraph]** Despite an increased understanding of women's human rights and appreciation for women's contribution to society **[Canada: in many countries there is still]**, gross under-representation of women in decision-making bodies related to politics, the economy and conflict resolution **[Canada: and prevention]** mechanisms persists. The **[Canada delete:** absence**]** **[Canada: under-representation]** of women hinders the inclusion of a gender perspective in these critical spheres of influence. Given that applied measures to increase women's participation in decision-making have been insufficient to reach full gender equality, new approaches and a renewed commitment at all levels are necessary.

36. Demographic trends, including **[Canada/Holy See: lowered fertility rates,]** increased life expectancy and lower mortality rates, have contributed to ageing of the population **[Canada: and therefore, an increase in chronic health conditions.]** Given the gap between male and female life expectancy, the number of widows and older single women has increased considerably. **[Canada: often leading to their social isolation and higher risks of health and other social challenges. A rise in chronic diseases as a major cause of mortality for women has implications for research, health-care facilities and spending and informal care systems. On the other hand, the current generation of young people is the largest in history. Adolescent girls have particular needs which will require increasing attention.]** Societies have much to gain from the knowledge and life experience of older women. Older women should be encouraged to **[Holy See: remain active as well as]** assume non-traditional roles in public life and decision-making. At the same time, mechanisms to ensure their **[Canada: human]** rights and quality of life, as well as address their needs, should be instituted, in view of the weakening of traditional family support systems and diminishing state welfare programmes. **[EU: shift end of paragraph to part IV, as it is action-oriented]** **[Canada: There is a need for the society as a whole to establish a mechanism to support and care for older persons.]**

[Canada new 36 bis: There is a rising epidemic of tobacco use among women, particularly young women. Women who smoke have markedly

increased risks of cancer, particularly lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, emphysema and other fatal diseases. Women also experience gender-specific risks from tobacco and environmental tobacco smoke. There is a need for comprehensive solutions to address the epidemic among women and girls, particularly prevention and cessation strategies.]

37. The **[Canada: rapid]** progression of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, **[Canada: particularly]** in the developing world has had a **[Holy See delete:** strong] **[Holy See: devastating]** impact on women. **[EU: Gender equality is a prerequisite for its prevention, but the lack of recognition of the sexual and reproductive rights of women means that the prevention of HIV/AIDS is mainly in the hands of men, while girls and young women are particularly at risk.] [Canada: made it an urgent public health and development issue. With 33 million people affected worldwide and 16,000 new infections a day, the virus is outstripping efforts to contain it and reversing hard-won gains of development. Infection rates are increasing among women and adolescent girls. In some regions and within particularly vulnerable groups, HIV infection in women, including youth, is increasing rapidly.]** The burden of care for people living with HIV, including orphans, falls **[Holy See: particularly]** on women, as state infrastructures are inadequate to respond to the challenges being posed. Women infected with HIV often suffer from discrimination and stigma **[Canada: and are often victims of gender-based violence]**. Issues related to **[EU: prevention, mutual responsibility,] [Croatia: the provision of adequate education for prevention of HIV/AIDS,]** mother-to-child transmission **[Holy See: of HIV]**, breastfeeding, **[Holy See delete:** abortion**], [Canada: information and education of youth, negotiating safe sex, sex trade workers, intravenous drug users, support groups, voluntary counselling and testing,]** partner notification and provision of essential drugs, including **[Canada delete:** azidothymidine (AZT)**], [Canada: drugs for opportunistic infections,]** have not been sufficiently addressed. **[EU: There is also the need for a more effective approach to changing behaviour and to empowering women to demand safe sex and take full control of their sexual relations. There are positive signs in the fight against HIV/AIDS in some countries that behavioural changes have occurred among young people and experience shows that educational programmes directed to young people on sexuality and HIV/AIDS can lead to a more positive view on gender relations, delayed sexual initiation and reduced risk of sexually transmitted diseases.]**

[Holy See: 37 bis. Mortality and morbidity among adults and children from infectious, parasitic and water-borne diseases, such as tuberculosis, malaria and schistosomiasis, continue to take their toll.]

[Holy See: 37 ter. The impact of the long-term and large-scale environmental problems, especially in Central Asia and other regions, is affecting the health and well-being of individuals and limiting progress in development.]

38. The increase in casualties and damage caused by natural disasters **[Canada delete:** has raised awareness of the inefficiency of the existing approaches and intervention methods in responding to such emergency situations,] in which women, more often than men, are burdened with the responsibility of meeting the immediate daily needs of their families. **[Canada delete:** This situation has increased] **[Canada: has raised]** awareness that a gender perspective must be incorporated whenever disaster mitigation and recovery strategies are being developed **[Canada: and implemented]**.

39. **[Canada delete:** There has been an increase in **[EU delete:** violent conflict,]] **[Canada: Armed conflicts continue to present a challenge to gender equality and women's human rights], [EU: the impact of armed conflict on civilian population,]** in particular, intra-State armed conflict, often rooted in political transition, economic dislocation, fragile civil society **[EU: increasing ideological extremists]** and a weakening of the State. Various forces, including arms and drugs dealers **[Croatia: traffickers in women and girls as well as promulgators of their sexual exploitation]** and organized crime syndicates, capitalize on existing tensions **[Canada: and fail to adhere to international human rights and humanitarian law principles]. [EU delete:** The majority of the **[Canada delete:** casualties] **[Canada: victims]** are civilian women and children.] There has also been an increase in **[Holy See: forced displacement, psychological, systematic campaigns of terror and intimidation and]** gender-based violence, including **[EU: systematic]** rape, **[EU: and forced pregnancy and their consequences in terms of physical, physiological and mental trauma, as**

well as in continued sexual abuse and possible social exclusion.] **[EU/Canada/Turkey delete:** and the intentional spread of the HIV/AIDS virus as a deliberate weapon of war to annihilate the enemy.] **[Canada: Girls are also recruited or abducted into situations of armed conflict as, inter alia, combatants, sexual slaves or providers of domestic services.]** There are increased efforts at the international level **[EU: to assure victims of their human rights procured under international and national laws and to give them access to legal redress, as well as]** to bring the perpetrators of war-related gender-based crimes to justice, end their **[Canada delete:** immunity] **[Canada: impunity,]** and compensate the victims **[Canada: and accept systemic rape as a war crime.]** **[EU: Whereas women have often been regarded as primarily victims in armed conflict, women are also active in the area of conflict resolution, as well as in rebuilding civilian societies after times of military conflict. A phenomenon related to these conflicts is the large proportion of women in refugee and displaced populations.]**

40. **[EU/Canada delete:** Violence against women in all its forms has become better understood, more broadly discussed by the public and addressed by various legal and policy measures. Numerous women's networks continue to advocate the eradication of domestic violence and the position that national authorities be held accountable for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women.] **[Canada: Violence against women in all its forms has become better understood, more broadly discussed by the public and addressed by various legal and policy measures. Numerous women's networks, Governments, and international organizations continue to advocate the eradication of all forms of violence against women and girls. There is a growing acknowledgement that national authorities be held accountable for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women. In particular, NGOs insist that Governments recognize and exercise due diligence in preventing, investigating and punishing all forms of violence against women.]**

41. **[Canada delete:** The changing context of gender relations, as well as the discussion on gender equality and **[EU: sexual and]** reproductive rights, has led to increased reassessment of gender roles. This has further encouraged a discussion on the roles and responsibilities of women and men in working towards gender equality and the need for changing **[EU delete:** the stereotypical] **[EU: traditional]** roles and identities of women and men.] **[EU: In some countries there has been a recognition of the importance of a balanced participation of women and men, both in remunerated work and in professional life, and of the involvement of men in the process of gender equality in a perspective of social change.]** **[Canada: The changing context of gender relations, as well as the commitments made at the International Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women to promote and protect gender equality and equity and women's rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, has made clear that women and men must work together to realize gender equality and has led to increased questioning among some women and men, and in research of gender roles and the issues of masculinity and femininity. This has further encouraged a discussion on the importance of taking the situation and position of both women and men into consideration when working towards gender equality. The knowledge of how unequal gender relations in different spheres is produced and reproduced has given important input into how policy, programmes and projects can be focused on the root causes of gender discrimination.]**

[Canada new 41 bis: There is an increased awareness that gender equality cannot be fully realized through institutional arrangements alone. And certainly one of the most valuable means of realizing empowerment of women is education.]

IV. Actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

[Reference will be made in the chapeau to the need to take action at different instrumental levels; specific language to be submitted by delegates]

42. In view of the progress made five years after the Beijing Conference in the implementation of the Platform for Action as well as the current challenges affecting its full realization, Governments now

recommit themselves to further actions and initiatives to overcome the obstacles and address the challenges. Governments, in taking additional steps to achieve the goals of the Platform, recognize that the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls is a prerequisite for realizing gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century.

43. Organizations of the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization, other international and regional intergovernmental bodies, parliaments, civil society, including the private sector and NGOs, are called upon to support government efforts and to develop complementary programmes of their own to achieve full and effective implementation of the Platform for Action.

44. Achieving gender equality includes ensuring equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys. It implies that women's as well as men's interests, concerns, experiences and priorities are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all actions in all areas of societal development.

45. The endorsement of the Platform for Action by Governments and the international community indicates an agreement to a common development agenda with gender equality as an underlying principle. Moreover, it establishes that sustainable human development for all societies is possible only when women become full and equal partners in and benefit from development policy-making and practice.

46. The efforts to ensuring women's participation in development have shifted from a focus on women's conditions and basic needs to a more holistic and systemic approach based on the consideration of rights and equal partnerships. The recent trends towards globalization, liberalization, privatization and information and communications technologies pose new challenges to this process. Policies and programmes should be formulated to achieve the goal of sustainable human development, secure livelihoods and safety nets for women in the labour market and eliminate increasing and disproportionate poverty among women. Macro-economic policies and institutions should adopt a gender perspective to ensure that development dividends of the new economy are shared on equal grounds. The right to good health and well-being and access to health services are entitlements that are increasingly elusive, particularly in the face of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the growing proportion of older women.

47. Given that a majority of the world's women are subsistence producers who depend on environmental resources, there is a need to integrate women's knowledge and priorities in the conservation and management of such resources. New approaches and infrastructure are needed in order to effectively respond to disaster and emergency situations that threaten the environment, livelihood and security, as well as the management of the basic requirements of daily life. Governments call upon United Nations organizations, NGOs, the private sector and relevant civil society organizations to show strong political will and commitment to human development and direct investments to these critical areas.

48. The maintenance of international peace and security, the securing of social justice and human rights and the promotion of better standards of living are the central goals of Governments and the international community. Global, lasting peace cannot be attained without the full participation of women in peace processes at the national and international levels, particularly in decision-making. Gender considerations must play an integral part in conflict resolution efforts and in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all actions in all areas of peace-building.

49. Political will and commitment are crucial to ensuring the adoption and implementation of comprehensive, holistic and transformative policies in all areas with gender as a critical factor. Such policies need to define goals and strategies in terms of the interests, contributions, rights and needs of women and men and to create equal opportunities and choices. Policy commitments to expand human capabilities are essential to establish the framework for women's entitlements to economic and other relevant critical resources, services and institutions as well as participation in decision-making and management. The policy-making process requires the partnership of men and women at all levels. Men need to be actively involved in efforts to achieve the goals of the Platform for Action.

50. A non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive legislative framework ensures women's *de jure* equality and creates an enabling environment to turn

rights into reality. Equality before the law and equal protection by or under the law, together with adequate means of redress against violations, knowledge about rights and access to resources and a supportive law enforcement system and judiciary will accelerate achievement of the goal of gender equality. Furthermore, new regulatory measures need to be introduced to legislative reform processes, which are already under way as a result of globalization, privatization and liberalization, to ensure equal economic rights and opportunities. This is particularly important for issues of social security, property ownership and inheritance.

51. Violence against women is a major obstacle to the achievement of gender equality, development and peace and has become a major human rights concern. Actions to eradicate violence against women at the domestic, national and international level are essential. Armed conflict and emergency situations impose serious threats to the lives of women and children. Therefore, the adoption and implementation of gender-sensitive national and international legislation eliminating violence against women in situations of armed conflict is essential. International instruments, ongoing negotiations and international discussions aimed at the limitation of armed conflict and discouraging gender-based violence, including rape, help create an enabling environment for the achievement of gender equality, development and peace.

52. Strong national machineries for the advancement of women promote political commitment at the highest level and act as catalysts for open public debate on gender equality as a societal goal and the elaboration of action programmes. They support and facilitate the development and adoption of policies, legislation, programmes and capacity-building for women's empowerment. They also support institutional structures and mechanisms across all levels and areas of Government tasked with promoting gender equality through mainstreaming a gender perspective into existing institutions. Reforms to meet the challenges of the changing world order are essential to ensure women's equal access to formal institutions such as banks, trade unions, credit associations and health-care delivery systems. Institutional changes are a strategic and important aspect of creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the Platform for Action.

53. Programme support to enhance women's opportunities, potentials and activities needs to be undertaken at two levels: women-specific programmes aimed at meeting the special needs of women for capacity-building, empowerment and organizational development; and the application of a gender mainstreaming approach in all programme formulation and implementation activities. It is particularly important to look for new entry points for programming in response to emerging trends and challenges. Women's participation in and contribution to programmes designed to bring about peace should be encouraged.

54. Effective and coordinated change for the full implementation of the Platform requires a clear knowledge base of the situation of women and girls, time-bound targets and mechanisms to monitor progress. Efforts are also needed to ensure capacity-building for all actors involved and to increase transparency and accountability of actions taken towards these goals.

55. The realization of the goals of gender equality, development and peace at the national and international level needs to be supported by the allocation of human and financial resources for specific and targeted activities, as well as through the explicit attention to these goals in all budgetary actions at the national and international level.

Actions to be taken at the national level

56. Governments must act to:

(a) Expand and encourage the use of specific, time-bound targets to achieve gender balance in the participation of women and men in all areas and at all levels of public life, especially in decision-making positions, and all political activities, including in electoral processes;

(b) Set explicit time-bound targets for women's full and equal participation in key policy-making levels in strategic and development institutions, including ministries of finance and planning, agriculture, education, health and environment;

(c) Set quotas for women's participation in local development bodies as part of the decentralization processes taking place in many countries around the world;

(d) Make equal access to education by girls and completion of basic education a paramount goal of educational policy;

(e) Adopt policies to close the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005 and to ensure universal primary education for both girls and boys by 2015, as advocated by several global conferences;

(f) Continue efforts to fully implement national action plans modelled on the Platform for Action developed during the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, as well as international agreements, including international human rights instruments of particular relevance to women;

(g) Repeal all discriminatory legislation by 2005;

(h) Create and maintain a non-discriminatory, as well as a gender-sensitive, legal environment, and eliminate legislative gaps that leave women and girls without protection of their rights;

(i) Review all existing, as well as future legislation to ensure compatibility and full compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(j) Adopt incentive systems for the private sector and for educational establishments that facilitate and strengthen compliance with non-discriminatory legislation;

(k) Develop and implement laws prohibiting customary or traditional practices that are violations of women's human rights and obstacles to the full enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(l) Treat all forms of violence against women as a public offence punishable by law;

(m) Establish family courts and adopt legislation to handle criminal matters relating to domestic violence;

(n) Introduce effective legislation in all States to protect women against violence and harmonize all laws to ensure that victims of such violence are not harmed again;

(o) Adopt national legislation consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity to protect the knowledge, innovations and practices of women in indigenous and local communities relating to traditional medicines, biodiversity and indigenous technologies;

(p) Integrate mental health services into primary health-care systems and train health workers to recognize and care for girls and women of all ages who have experienced any form of gender-based violence;

(q) Review and revise existing health legislation to reflect the new demands for service and care by women and girls as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and new knowledge about women's needs for specific mental and occupation health programmes and for the ageing process;

(r) Incorporate gender equality perspectives into budgetary processes;

(s) Incorporate an allocation for gender equality programmes in national budgets;

(t) Establish specific allocations in national budgets for supporting development programmes for women;

(u) Create social security systems for poor women in view of the uncertainties and conditions of work associated with globalization;

(v) Ensure that national legislative and administrative reform processes linked to land reform, decentralization and reorientation to a market economy give women equal rights with men to economic resources, including access to credit, ownership and control over land and other assets;

(w) Create new, or reinforce existing, institutional mechanisms to work with national machineries and NGOs and strengthen societal support for gender equality;

(x) Establish effective equal opportunities commissions;

(y) Design all government information policies and strategies in a gender-sensitive manner;

(z) Provide adequate resources in national budgets for national machineries for the advancement of women so that they can implement their mandates;

(aa) Provide national statistical offices with institutional and financial support in order that their services may be demand-driven and enable them to respond to requests for data disaggregated by sex and

age for use in the formulation of gender-sensitive statistical indicators for monitoring and impact assessment;

(bb) Develop national capacity to undertake policy-oriented research and impact studies by universities and national research/training institutes to enable knowledge-based policy-making;

(cc) Publish crime statistics regularly to increase transparency and map trends in law enforcement concerning violations of the rights of women;

(dd) Introduce measures to limit acc s to weapons by 2005.

57. Governments and non-governmental organizations must act to:

(a) Encourage coalitions among NGOs, grass-roots organizations and traditional, community and religious leaders for the protection and promotion of women's human rights;

(b) Review health sector reform initiatives and their impact on women's health, in particular on rural and poor urban health service delivery, and ensure that all women have full and equal access to health services;

(c) Re-orient health information, services and training for health workers to incorporate gender-sensitivity and reflect user's perspectives with regard to interpersonal and communications skills and user's right to privacy and confidentiality;

(d) Develop and use practical tools and indicators for gender mainstreaming, including gender-sensitive research, statistics and information.

58. Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other actors of the civil society, must act to:

(a) Establish the creation of institutional networks to support the career development and promotion of women;

(b) Support women in senior positions to act as role models and mentors for other women and compile national rosters of possible women leaders;

(c) Design policies that protect and promote women's enjoyment of all human rights and create an environment that does not tolerate violations of the rights of women and girls.

Actions to be taken at the international level

59. The United Nations, including the regional commissions, the United Nations system, international and regional organizations must act to:

(a) Assist Governments to develop an integrated programme of support for the 12 critical areas of concern contained in the Platform;

(b) Allocate resources to regional and national programmes in the above-mentioned areas;

(c) Support women's NGOs in providing services as one strategy to increase Government's capacity to meet commitments made at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development and the follow-up to the Conference (Cairo+5) regarding access to quality and affordable health services, including sexual, reproductive health care and family planning information and services, as well as maternal and essential obstetric care.

60. The organizations of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions and NGOs must act to:

(a) Assist Governments in developing gender-sensitive responses to humanitarian crises resulting from armed conflict, natural disasters and environmental degradation;

(b) Ensure women's full and equal participation in sustainable reconstruction efforts;

(c) Support the work of the international tribunals, in particular with regard to gender-sensitivity;

(d) Support the activities of women's networks working to eradicate all forms of violence against women;

(e) Ensure that all actors are held accountable for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women;

(f) Launch an international "zero tolerance" campaign concerning violence against women by the end of 2001.

61. The organizations of the United Nations system must act to:

(a) Convene an international task force to develop an international consensus on common indicators on all types of violence and ways to measure violence by the end of 2001;

(b) Achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution in all posts at the professional level and above, in particular at the higher levels in their secretariats, in hiring of consultants in peacekeeping missions and in all activities and report thereon;

(c) Introduce, develop and monitor special activities, measures and affirmative action for women staff in areas of recruitment and promotion until the goal is reached.

Actions to be taken at the national and international level

62. Governments and international organizations, including the United Nations system, must act to:

(a) Institute action-oriented programmes, with time-bound targets and benchmarks for measuring progress;

(b) Ensure greater international cooperation in and national attention to acquiring accurate data and developing indicators on violence against women, including women migrant workers;

(c) Promote international cooperation to support national efforts in the development and use of gender-related analysis and statistics;

(d) Support or conduct performance appraisals and impact analysis studies of measures undertaken to achieve gender equality;

(e) Improve the collection of comprehensive information about women, including HIV/AIDS throughout the life cycle, and of data disaggregated by sex and age;

(f) Encourage and implement curriculum changes in training for public officials to ensure attention to gender equality goals;

(g) Ensure that women are involved in decision-making at all levels, including as special envoys and special representatives;

(h) Increase numbers of women to at least 30 to 35 per cent in the civilian police forces and the military, in particular at decision-making levels;

(i) Increase policy responses, effective legislation and other measures aimed at eradication of violence against girls, especially against sexual and economic exploitation, prostitution, child pornography, trafficking and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation;

(j) Prosecute the perpetrators of all forms of violence against women and girls and sentence them appropriately;

(k) Improve knowledge and availability of, and accessibility to, remedies against denial or violations of rights, including effective and gender-sensitive courts, out-of-court procedures such as mediation or conciliation mechanisms, independent human rights institutions with explicit mandates on human rights of women and international judicial and quasi-judicial procedures such as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(l) Eliminate impunity for breaches of human rights and humanitarian law through strict application of these standards, especially for military personnel, including peacekeeping forces;

(m) Encourage universal ratification of the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court by 2005 and support development of rules under the Statute to ensure that they incorporate gender-sensitivity;

(n) Ensure education and training for all actors in contact with victims of violence;

(o) Create an adequate statistics base and clearing-house of good practices and lessons learned on the elimination of various forms of violence against women by the end of 2001;

(p) Undertake impact analysis of measures on violence against women;

(q) Work with private sector partners and media networks at the national level, particularly in the area of information and communications technologies, to ensure that issues of equal access for women and men are taken into account;

(r) Establish programmes to build the capacity of women's NGOs and organizations to use new information and communications technologies in their development activities;

(s) Accelerate the implementation of the 20/20 initiative;

(t) Encourage developed countries to reach the target of committing 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) for official development assistance, thereby increasing the flow of resources for gender equality, development and peace;

(u) Endorse a gender-sensitive global poverty eradication strategy during the Millennium Assembly in September 2000;

(v) Establish social development funds to minimize the negative effects of structural adjustment programmes and trade liberalization on women and the disproportionate burden borne by poor women;

(w) Support the Cologne initiative for the reduction of debt, particularly the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative, and the provision that funds saved should be used to support anti-poverty programmes that address gender dimensions;

(x) Establish "lending windows" with simplified procedures and collateral requirements that specifically cater to the savings and credit needs of women.

63. Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system and relevant actors of civil society, must act to:

(a) Seek to create partnerships among Governments, international organizations, NGOs, the private sector, civil society, women and men in support of gender equality;

(b) Undertake capacity-building, including through gender training, for all actors accountable for achieving gender equality;

(c) Develop policies that target men, in particular younger men, on changing attitudes and behaviours concerning gender roles and responsibilities;

(d) Expand gender-awareness campaigns and gender training among women and men to combat the persistence of traditional stereotypes;

(e) Provide information, education and training and equal access for women and girls to public goods and services;

(f) Devise and implement programmes to reconcile family and professional responsibilities for both men and women;

(g) Apply affirmative action measures to give women equal access to capacity-building training programmes to enhance women's participation in decision-making at all levels, including as planners, managers and executives of anti-poverty, health and environmental protection and resource management programmes;

(h) Reach out to illiterate adult women through massive literacy campaigns using all modern technological means available and maintain acquired knowledge through post-literacy training, aiming at reducing the female illiteracy rate to at least half its 2000 level by 2005;

(i) Examine the causes for the decline in the enrolment of girls and boys at the primary and secondary levels in some countries, the rise in the number of females in tertiary education in many parts of the world and the consequences of these phenomena;

(j) Ensure widespread dissemination of information and knowledge on the application of human rights and humanitarian law standards;

(k) Facilitate the creation of alliances between governmental authorities, parliaments, the judiciary and women's rights groups to monitor compliance with non-discriminatory legislation;

(l) Encourage the media to actively support the realization of the goal of gender equality;

(m) Adopt, or develop further, codes of conduct, professional guidelines and other self-regulatory guidelines for the media and the information industry to ensure women's equal access and opportunities as producers and consumers of media and information;

(n) Design approaches to encourage the media, including through the Internet, to reduce and eliminate stereotyping of women and girls and the commercialization of sex and violence against women and girls;

(o) Develop programmes that support women's ability to create, access and distribute information, including through access to and use of new information technologies such as the Internet;

(p) Target journalists and media specialists, media associations, educational and training institutions to promote balanced and non-stereotyped portrayals of women;

(q) Implement radio and advertising campaigns emphasizing the equal value of girls and boys in society;

(r) Study the role that new information technology can play in advancing gender equality;

(s) Provide access to technology that enables women's organizations to build and maintain networks and to generate and share information;

(t) Support NGOs in efforts to develop community strategies to protect women of all ages from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, provide care to infected girls, women and their families and mobilize all parts of the community;

(u) Provide support systems, including adequate medication, housing and monitoring for women and girls infected by HIV/AIDS;

(v) Discourage, through the media and other means, customary laws and practices, such as early marriage, polygamy and female genital mutilation, that increase women's and girls' susceptibility to HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases;

(w) Apply international and national labour laws to irregular forms of work, such as outsourcing, part-time labour and informal subcontracting, created by globalization and which remain unprotected by standard labour laws;

(x) Re-orient agricultural extension services, including credit, to meet needs of women producers and to strengthen women's vital role in providing food security;

(y) Adopt special measures to improve the situation of rural women and to empower them to ensure the socio-economic security of their households;

(z) Support the intermediary role of NGOs in establishing linkages between financial institutions and disadvantaged women in rural and urban areas;

(aa) Support the capacity of women's NGOs to mobilize resources to ensure sustainability of their development activities;

(bb) Undertake research on emerging trends that are creating new gender disparities, such as migration of women and its effects on household members and the economy, and new conditions of employment and their effects on gender roles and relations;

(cc) Involve more women in conflict resolution negotiations, peacemaking and peace-building;

(dd) Provide training opportunities for girls to develop their skills in leadership, advocacy and conflict resolution;

(ee) Ensure that differences in the impact of armed conflict on women and men are widely understood and addressed through dissemination of information and public awareness campaigns;

(ff) Design and implement innovative programmes to raise the consciousness of all members of society, in particular children, about the importance of non-violent conflict resolution;

(gg) Enhance existing and develop further mechanisms to ensure access to education and health services to refugees, especially women and girls;

(hh) Support the critical role of women's NGOs in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the integration of a gender perspective in the design and implementation of environmental conservation and resource management mechanisms, programmes and infrastructure.